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in one industry after another. The inefficient are being crowded into the few employments in which it is still economical to employ low-grade, poorly-paid labor rather than machinery. Poor pay, originally the result of inefficiency, becomes the cause of a still greater inefficiency, while the demand for untrained, casual labor is itself a cause of the supply.

But let it be understood that failure to reach a certain standard condemns one to loss of freedom, and a new incentive will be furnished to individual effort. Let the state once realize that it must support all whom it does not train to normal efficiency, and practical technical instruction will supersede mediæval conventionalities in education.

The plan is undoubtedly radical, but it is sound in theory and is indorsed by experts.

KATHARINE FELTON.

The American Federation of Labor, by MORTON A. ALDRICH, No. 4 of Vol. III, *Economic Studies*, published for the American Economic Association. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1898. 12mo, pp. 47.

MR. MORTON's monograph presents in succinct form the essential facts relating to the highest organization of trades unions in the United States. His sources of information though meager are official, the reports of annual conventions of the Federation of Labor, the files of its official journal, pamphlets published by its authority, and the compilation he has made will be of much service in a field almost without written history.

It was no slight task, from the material at hand, to give as accurately as Mr. Morton has given, an outline of the organization and work of the federation. In presenting the relation of the federation to affiliated bodies he has not been quite so successful, and a critic should perhaps point out that national trades unions antedate the birth of the federation, and national conventions of trade organizations were not instituted upon suggestion of President Gompers of the federation, as a reading of page 225 of this pamphlet seems to suggest, but long preceded the first meeting of the federation, and are general among trades unions including those not affiliated with the federation. This is a vital point, since an understanding of the philosophy

of the trades union movement is not possible unless the relation of the affiliated bodies one to another is clearly stated. The unit of the trades union movement is the local union, however much authority or activity that local union may delegate to other bodies in which it has representation. This is not made clear by Mr. Morton, and perhaps one cannot arrive at the knowledge of it by perusal of documents and literature which relate to the federation only.

Mr. Morton gives one chapter to the birth, growth and form of organization of the federation, two to its policy towards affiliated bodies and towards other labor organizations, one to the legislation which it has aided in securing and is demanding, and a concluding chapter to its probable future as he sees it in the light of its history.

Its past policy is fairly summed up in one sentence: "The federation has avoided the three chief mistakes which led to the downfall of its predecessors, secrecy of organization, over-centralization of power, and political action." For its immediate future he sees two questions of first importance, "Are American workingmen likely to become socialists?" and "Will the federation prove less ephemeral than the similar labor organizations which it has superseded?" The last question he believes may be answered in the affirmative if the policy of the past be continued. This makes of supreme importance the first question, for if the federation depart from its policy of refraining from political action it is most unlikely that the organization could be committed to any but a socialist party.

Mr. Morton points out that since 1890 trades unionists who are also socialists, "represented by one-third to one-fifth of the delegates in the convention," have endeavored to secure the support of the federation "for the principle of socialism and for the Socialist Labor party," and he recognizes that these efforts, although without success, are of increasing force. "Yet," he says, "it can be safely said that the majority of the workingmen of this generation will hold aloof from any socialist party."

For reasons which have nothing to do with the principles at issue, it is most unlikely that the trades unions in any form will join with the Socialist Labor party; but that they will be kept "aloof from any socialist party," even for a generation, is not as safe a prophecy, possibly, as it may seem. The trades union movement is meant by its adherents to control, in the interests of the workers and in the greatest possible degree, conditions of employment. It is certainly con-

ceivable that an industrial movement may—perhaps at an unexpected moment and in an unlooked for manner—focalize in political action, becoming a socialist measure then by whatever party name it be called, and sweep with it the organized workingmen, just because their trades union education has prepared them for concentrated and concerted action.

It is not without interest in this connection to call attention to the action of the British Trades Union congress of the present year. Mr. Morton speaks of the extremely radical congress the British trades unions held in 1893, when a socialist declaration was adopted, and says: "The more recent British trade union congresses have not continued the declaration. Sixty-nine per cent. of the delegates of the congress of 1894 voted against it." Since the issue of this pamphlet the congress of 1898 has adopted the following, by a vote of 708,000 to 410,000:

Inasmuch as this congress believes that the labor problem can only be solved when the land and the means of production, distribution and exchange are made collective property, and as the opinion prevails that political action is the best method to accomplish this object, it is recommended that trades unionists render their moral and financial support to the Socialist Labor party.

This is a wide swing of the pendulum from the vote of 1894 to which Mr. Morton calls attention. In the years 1893-4 the unions affiliated in the American Federation of Labor considered a similar proposition, submitted from the convention of the federation held in Chicago in 1893. It received a large affirmative vote, but the convention meeting in Denver in 1894 buried the question for the time. It is unwise to prophesy that it will not be resurrected during the present generation.

ALZINA PARSONS STEVENS.

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The Bargain Theory of Wages. By JOHN DAVIDSON, Professor of Political Economy in the University of New Brunswick. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1898. 12mo, pp. v+319.

At once the despair and the triumph of the economist are found in the classification of his matter. The matter of economics is so homogeneous, so all-of-a-kind, so interwoven and interdependent, that